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U.B.C.
IS BORN
1908

*I am the new, and hold the Book of Fate;
Pulsing with new-born life, I sit and gaze
Adown the bandit years which lie in wait
To trap these hunters of my youthful days.¹*

DURING the nine years when McGill University College carried the torch of publicly-supported higher education in the Province, the movement for a provincial university continued unabated. It seems to have needed only a strong leader and the right time to bring it success. That leader was found in the person of Henry Esson Young, who, with unflagging zeal, as Minister of Education from 1907 to 1916, finally set the University of British Columbia on her tortuous way.

As we have seen, university graduates in British Columbia were divided in their views with regard to the Act, passed in February, 1906, establishing the Royal Institution: there was no division among them at any time on the question of a provincial university. The storm of debates which surged around the McGill University College Act had the effect of giving new vitality to public interest in higher education generally and intensified demands on the Government for a provincial university. At a meeting of graduates in Vancouver on February 26, six days after the Act was passed, it was resolved unanimously

to prepare and have circulated and signed a petition to the Legislature, asking that

¹ "U.B.C. Speaks," by A.J.A., U.B.C. Annual, 1916, p. 37.

Demands for a University

body to revive the British Columbia University Act, so far as it needs revival, and to grant under that Act power to the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council to endow the University with a grant of land.

On March 2 a letter embodying the resolution was sent to the Premier, the Honourable Richard McBride. The resolution had been moved by Mr. George H. Cowan, K.C., and the letter to the Premier was signed on behalf of the Committee of Graduates by His Honour Judge Alexander Henderson, both of whom had strongly opposed the McGill University College Act.

The letter to the Premier expressed the feelings of Vancouver graduates:

Although there have been differences of opinion as to the light in which Bill 23 (establishing the Royal Institution) should be viewed, there has been absolute unanimity in favour of the immediate endowment of the Provincial University. It is felt that a step like this should be taken when the lands of the Province are of comparatively little market value and that every year's delay can only increase the difficulty of setting aside an ample endowment. This had been the policy adopted in the other Provinces of Canada, and has, it is submitted, been a sound one.

The letter concluded with an appeal for immediate action by the Government. A strong committee was appointed by the University Graduates Association to gain public support for their resolution. The committee, which consisted of His Honour Judge Alexander Henderson, Mr. F. C. Wade, K.C., Mr. George H. Cowan, K.C., and Dr. R. Pearson, went to work with a will. By the end of the summer of 1906, largely owing to the effort of this quartette, the provincial governing bodies of the Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptist churches voted to memorialize the Government. The Synod of the Presbyterian Church advised "the establishment of a Provincial University through the revision of an Act (1891) which is still on the Statute books and the setting apart of a suitable tract of land from the public domain as an endowment for such a University." The Methodist Conference urged "the necessity of establishing a University and setting apart of a sufficiency of public lands for the endowment of the same." The Conference, bearing in mind the Columbian Methodist College in New Westminster and McGill University College now authorized in Vancouver, saw in a provincial university, "with which Colleges established by the various denominations or other bodies may affiliate," a means to "promote the unification of the educational system of the Province." The Baptist Convention "declared itself in favour of the immediate establishment of a Provincial examining University with which all Colleges within the Province attempting University work could become affiliated." At the same time it resolved "that the Government of British Columbia be requested to set aside one-fourth of all public lands in the Province to be known as 'educational lands', the proceeds of the sale or lease of such lands to be devoted to the maintenance of secondary and University education within the Province." The

resolutions of these important religious bodies were sent to the Minister of Education and committees of church leaders were chosen to wait on the Government.

This revival of public interest in a provincial university came as a surprise to the Government. When the Act to incorporate the Royal Institution had been under discussion in the House of Assembly in February, the Honourable F. J. Fulton, Minister of Education, referring to the defunct University Act of 1891, expressed his belief that feeling regarding it "has since nearly all died out." The Province, he felt, was still not ready for it. As Minister of Education he had welcomed McGill's offer to extend her own work in British Columbia because, as he said, "it would be at least 15 or 20 years more before we would find it possible to establish a University of our own." He could not foresee that the McGill University Act, which he so ardently and patiently piloted through the legislature, would itself be the means of revitalizing the very movement which it appeared to the Minister to be replacing. At the end of the 1906 session, Mr. Fulton received the portfolio of Attorney-General, being succeeded at the Education Office by the Honourable William M. Manson. By the Provincial Election of February 2, 1907, the McBride Government was returned with a comfortable majority of 15, and the member for Atlin, Dr. Henry Esson Young, was made Provincial Secretary and Minister of Education. To him the Premier entrusted the task of dealing with the new and insistent demands for a provincial university.

Dr. Young was well qualified for the task. He brought to it a deep interest in the problems of secondary and higher education and a conviction of their values in modern community living. Born at Valleyfield in the Province of Quebec on February 24, 1862, he graduated in Arts from Queen's University, Kingston, and in Medicine from McGill in 1888. In the Summer Session of 1887 he studied in Sir William Osler's clinics and practice wards in the University of Pennsylvania Hospital and in 1890 spent some months in the United Kingdom. He practised medicine for a few years in St. Louis, Missouri, before coming to British Columbia in 1901. After two years as a general medical practitioner he was elected to the Provincial Legislature in 1903. The story of Dr. Young's great work for public health, as Provincial Secretary, from 1907 to 1916, belongs elsewhere. The same period, during which he served also as Minister of Education, saw the reorganization of the entire school system of the Province. We are specially interested here in his association with higher education and it is significant that, when he was offered the Portfolio of Minister of Education, "the inducement held out to him by the Premier was that he should have a free hand in founding a University in British Columbia."² His mind appears to have been

² W. C. Gibson: "Makers of the University—Henry Esson Young." U.B.C. Alumni Chronicle, Vol. 9, No. 2, Summer, 1955, p. 16.

made up already on this question. He would direct his efforts toward removing the "colonial status" and establishing the independence of the Province in the area of higher education.³ He accepted the challenge to action issued by the university graduates, representatives of the churches and by a large section of the press of the Province, and threw the weight of his political influence behind the movement.

Hopes for any substantial advance in university policy rested then, as they do now, fifty years later, on the readiness of the Government to supply necessary funds. In the annual budget battle in the Government caucus, the voice of education is likely to be drowned in the louder clamour for roads, railways, public works, etc. Dr. Young was attracted by the proposed scheme of land endowments, first advocated in 1872 by Superintendent of Education Jessop, as a means of financing a university, making it independent of annual votes from the Provincial Treasury.

The first public announcement of his purpose came in the Speech from the Throne, delivered by the Lieutenant-Governor, the Honourable James Dunsmuir, to the newly-elected Legislative Assembly on March 7, 1907:

In order that the youth of the Province may be enabled to perfect themselves in the arts and sciences without having to seek abroad the facilities for Higher Education, a measure will be submitted for your consideration authorizing the setting apart of a sufficient portion of the Crown Lands to create a fund for the establishment and maintenance of a provincial University.

On March 25 Dr. Young presented Bill No. 25, "An Act to Aid the University of British Columbia by a Reservation of Provincial Lands," to be "cited as the University Endowment Act, 1907." The Bill provided that the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council should set apart within three years "lands not exceeding two million acres," to "be administered and disposed of under the provisions of the 'Land Act'." All revenues "derived from the sale or other disposition of said lands, not including, however, any taxes or royalties," were to be "devoted to the maintenance by said University" of the four Faculties of Arts and Science, Medicine, Law and Applied Science. This Bill, with minor amendments, became law on April 25. Even its proponents had only vague ideas of the location of the areas to be set apart and the amount of the endowment to be expected from them. The Premier, the Honourable Richard McBride, stated "that the reserved lands, which would be in the northern and interior parts of the Province, would perhaps have a value of from \$2.00 to \$3.00 an acre," and he thought "that the reservation proposed would produce an annual income of perhaps \$200,000." These forecasts proved to be far too optimistic but the Land Endowment Act was im-

³ Loc. cit.

portant evidence of the Government's goodwill. In addressing a committee of school trustees in the autumn of 1907, the Premier declared that by this Act the Government had "completed the ground-work" of the University; it would now "start on the super-structure."

Dr. Young had already been busy during the summer months drafting a Constitution for the new University. After consultation with the Chancellor of Toronto and the Principals of Queen's and McGill, a final draft was ready for presentation to the legislative session in the following spring under the title of "An Act to Establish and Incorporate a University for the Province of British Columbia." The Act with its 104 Sections was so carefully and skilfully prepared that it passed in the Legislature without amendment. It bore the date of 7 March, 1908. Experience of the intervening fifty years has revealed the advisability of numerous amendments, but the Act of 1908 forms, basically, the constitution of the University of British Columbia to-day. An outline of the measure, for convenient reference, was published in the University Calendar for the first session, 1915-16, and, with amendments, has appeared each year in the Calendar under the heading "The Constitution of the University."⁴

The Act of 1908 (slightly amended in 1912) provides:

That the University shall consist of a Chancellor, Convocation, Board of Governors, Senate, and the Faculties; that the first Convocation shall consist of all graduates of any university in His Majesty's dominions resident in the Province two years prior to the date fixed for the first meeting of Convocation, together with twenty-five members selected by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council; after the first Convocation it shall consist of the Chancellor, Senate, members of the first Convocation, and all graduates of the University; that the Chancellor shall be elected by Convocation; that the Board of Governors shall consist of the Chancellor, President and nine persons appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council; that the Senate shall consist of: (a) the Minister of Education, the Chancellor, and the President of the University, who shall be Chairman thereof; (b) the deans and two professors of each of the Faculties elected by members of the Faculty; (c) three members to be appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council; (d) The Superintendent of Education, the principals of the normal schools; (e) one member elected by the high-school principals and assistants who are actually engaged in teaching; (f) one member elected by the Provincial Teachers' Institute organised under subsection (e) of Section 8 of the Public Schools Act; (g) one member to be elected by the governing body of every affiliated college or school in this Province; (h) fifteen members to be elected by Convocation from the members thereof:

That the University shall be non-sectarian:

That the instruction shall be free to all students in the Arts classes:

That the women students shall have equality of privilege with men students:

That no other university having corporate powers capable of being exercised

⁴ Calendar of the University of British Columbia, First Session, 1915-16, pp. 14-15.

within the Province shall be known by the same name, nor have power to grant degrees.

An examination of the new Act reveals important differences from the Acts of 1890 and 1891. Chief of these was the creation of a new administrative body, the Board of Governors, and the division of powers between this body and the Senate, "so that," in the words of the Minister, in describing the innovation, "the business side would be in the hands of the Board of Governors and the teaching portion would be managed by the Senate." No member of the Provincial Cabinet, no appointee of the Board of Governors, except the President, no employee of the Education Department was eligible for membership on the Board of Governors. The Board possessed the general powers of "management, administration and control of property, revenue, business and affairs of the University." Among its powers were those of fixing fees, of appointing, promoting, and removing, upon recommendations of the President, members of the teaching staff, of creating Faculties and Departments and of directing financial policy. The Board had also semi-judicial powers in being the final court of appeal upon any question concerning the powers and duties of the Chancellor, the Faculties, the Convocation, or any officer or servant of the University. The Senate, on the other hand, was charged with the "government management and carrying out of the curriculum, instruction and education afforded by the Board." The administrative powers given to the Senate under the earlier Acts were now removed and it became the guardian of educational policy only. Its powers under the 1908 Act were intended to make the Senate a connecting link between the Faculties and Board of Governors. It was to deal with all matters reported by the Faculties, and "to consider and take action upon all such matters as shall be reported to it by the Board of Governors." No rules or regulations of a Faculty could become effective until approved by Senate. Perhaps the most significant feature of this administrative structure is the elimination of Faculty from membership in the Board of Governors. Under the Acts of 1890 and 1891, as we have seen, Deans and Professors were members of the senior governing body. The composition of the Board of Governors under the 1908 Act brought the University of British Columbia into line, in this respect, with the constitutional policy generally prevailing in other Canadian universities.

The tasks and duties of the University were set out in general terms in Section 9. The Land Endowment Act of the previous year provided for the maintenance of four Faculties. The University Act made no mention of any specific Faculty. The number of Faculties and the instruction given would be determined, in due course, by the Board and Senate. But the Act left no room for doubt regarding the high place which the University, as an instrument of higher education, was

Functions of the University

intended to fill in the life of the Province. The scope of its work was to be as wide as the intellectual and practical interests of every citizen, and the extent of its activities was to be limited only by its resources. Because the sentences of the Act still remain a directive to the University in the service it must render to the community, the Section is quoted in full:

The University shall, so far as and to the full extent which its resources from time to time permit, provide for: (a) Such instruction in all branches of liberal education as may enable students to become proficient in and qualify for degrees, diplomas and certificates in science, commerce, arts, literature, law, medicine, and all other branches of knowledge;

(b) Such instruction, especially, whether theoretical, technical, artistic, or otherwise, as may be of service to persons engaged or about to engage in manufactures, mining, engineering, agricultural and industrial pursuits of the Province of British Columbia;

(c) Facilities for the prosecution of original research in science, literature, arts, medicine, law and especially the applications of science;

(d) Such fellowships, scholarships, exhibitions, prizes and rewards and pecuniary and other aids as shall facilitate or encourage proficiency in the subjects taught in the University and also original research in every branch;

(e) Such extra-collegiate and extra-university instruction and teaching as may be recommended by the Senate.

The promise of such services, as objectives of the University, were certain to bring widespread support for the Act. Two popular features were the exemption of Arts undergraduates from payment of tuition fees, except for laboratory instruction, and the protection afforded to the interests of women, who were to enjoy equally with men the advantages and privileges of the University. It was explicitly provided also that women were eligible for membership in the Board of Governors and Senate. These provisions meant, of course, that women students might enrol in any Faculty. The first woman student, Margaret Louise Healy, was enrolled in the Faculty of Applied Science in the session 1916-17. The interest of school teachers throughout the Province was assured by a special clause giving permission to affiliate with the University to "any Normal School organized by the Department of Education for the instruction and training of teachers in the service of education and the art of teaching."

The University to be set up by this Act was quite obviously no "ivory tower." It was to be administered by business and professional men. It was to assist in the development of the Province. Premier McBride and Dr. Young in their public speeches stressed its utilitarian possibilities. In introducing the Bill in the House, Dr. Young declared that "the first thing they had borne in mind in providing for the University was the development of the mining, forestry and agricultural resources of the Province, and an education that would aid in this." And he added that the aim of the Government was "to bring about some immediate good instead

of wasting money upon expensive buildings." The Minister expressed the hope that a Faculty might be set up within the year—a hope destined to be deferred for seven years.

The length of time taken in implementing the Act was the result of several factors. The passage of the Land Endowment and the University Acts had relieved the public pressure put upon the Government by graduates and others, and had removed the sense of political urgency. McGill University College was satisfying much of the need for higher education and winning golden public opinions, meanwhile, for its work. Both the Premier and Dr. Young, in their public utterances, encouraged people to believe that the Provincial University would get under way in 1911. Premier McBride promised, before the 1910 session of the Legislature, that

just as soon as the site is selected for the University and other preliminary work accomplished, we will be prepared to bring from the East an efficient Staff and give the people educational work that will compare with Toronto and McGill.

In February, 1910, Dr. Young told the Legislature that he hoped to announce next session that the government was ready to lay the corner-stone of the University. Some time later the Royal Institution was given to understand that the University's "doors would be opened in September, 1913."⁵

It is probable, however, that Dr. Young's advocacy of the University was impeded chiefly, during these years, by the pre-occupation of the Government with the immense financial undertakings of the McBride Railway Policy, for which the Premier had won an overwhelming mandate in the election of 1909. In the years 1909-1915 were constructed the Canadian Northern Pacific Railway Company line, now a part of the Canadian National system, from Yellowhead Pass, along the Fraser and Thompson Rivers to Vancouver; the Dominion Government's Grand Trunk Pacific line through Northern British Columbia to Prince Rupert; the Kettle Valley Railway from Coldwater Junction to connect with the Canadian Pacific Railway at Hope; and portions of the Pacific Great Eastern Railway to connect the head of Howe Sound with Fort George. It was a time of great growth of population, business and industry. The railways formed a vital part of the spacious government planning. The generous terms offered the railway companies proved greater than the Provincial Treasury could bear.

The era of deficits, which had ended in 1904, returned in 1912 and continued through the remaining years of the McBride Ministry. . . . The surplus of seven years was swallowed up; the bright days of expansion were gone; and the financial depression, aggravated by the Great War, weighed heavily upon the Province. The railway

5 Annual Calendar: The McGill University College of British Columbia: Session 1914-15, p. 12.

enterprises, including the unfinished Pacific Great Eastern, and the large expenditures undertaken in the development period, added much to the public debt.⁶

It is against this background of overriding government policy and provincial expenditures that we must view the prolonged delay in carrying out the procedures necessary to establish the University. Because of the slow progress made, and, finally, the intervention of World War I, the University was forced to find a temporary home in the Fairview quarters of McGill College and the move to its permanent site at Point Grey was deferred for another ten years.

Two years were allowed to slip by before government action was taken on the choice of a site for the University. This question, which had precipitated the fiasco of the 1891 Education Act, still had political overtones, though these had now less serious political implications for a strongly-entrenched Government. How loud these overtones were Dr. Young discovered when the University Land Endowment Act was passed. He told the Legislature, three years later, when introducing the site Act in 1910, that,

following the Bill providing for the endowment of a University, the Government was besieged day and night by delegations from different parts of the Province; they were inundated by correspondence and swamped by editorials regarding sites for the University.

With the passing of the University Act in 1908, meetings were held and strong committees were established in Vancouver, Victoria, New Westminster, and other cities throughout the Province, to formulate their claims for consideration as the ideal location for the University. From the Victoria committee came the suggestion, made by their Chairman, Chief Justice Hunter, that, in view of the popular local feeling over the issue, the Government should "select a Committee of prominent educationists from the East and bring them out to decide as to the proper site from every point of view." The Chief Justice felt that the people of Victoria should support such a course of action "for our case is so strong that we have nothing to fear from any other city when we present it." The organization of public opinion, locally, continued through 1908 and 1909, often under the leadership of alumni of various universities, now united in a common purpose. The University Women's Club of Vancouver took an active part. Added strength was given to the arguments of the advocates for Vancouver, by a resolution of the Royal Institution, passed on May 14, 1909, "that should Vancouver or immediate vicinity be chosen as the site of the Provincial University, the Board is prepared to hand over the work now being carried on by the McGill University College of British Columbia!" This was indeed special pleading for when McGill

⁶ F. W. Howay: "British Columbia: The Making of a Province," p. 248.

See also pp. 257-8.

University had negotiated the establishment of her College in Vancouver, there was a "gentleman's agreement" to the effect she would step out when the Provincial University was ready to step in. University graduates in Vancouver set up a committee consisting of Principal Robinson of McGill College, W. P. Argue, Superintendent of City Schools, F. C. Wade, K.C., Miss A. B. Jamieson, Rev. George Pidgeon and E. W. Burwash. All sections of the lower mainland from New Westminster to North Vancouver agreed first, to unite on advocating a site in or around Vancouver, and then to argue, individually, for the site of their own preference. The Secretary of the Lower Mainland Committee, Dr. J. G. Davidson of McGill College, wrote for their opinions to the presidents of the leading American universities, including Woodrow Wilson of Princeton, the great majority of whom supported, as the best location, a large city or a suburb, an area adjacent to a city of varied industrial activities.

At last, on 25 February, following Chief Justice Hunter's proposal, the Government secured "the University Site Commission Act, 1910," to set up a board of "disinterested educationalists residing outside the Province of British Columbia" to choose a suitable location for the University, "which selection when made, shall be final." The names of the Commissioners, announced in April, were a formidable list. At their head was R. C. Weldon, Dean of the Law School at Dalhousie University, of which Premier McBride was a graduate; the others were Chancellor Cecil C. Jones, University of New Brunswick; Canon G. Dauth, Vice-Rector, Laval University; President Walter C. Murray, University of Saskatchewan; and Dr. Oscar D. Skelton, the Head, Department of Economics, Queen's University, later Deputy Minister, External Affairs, Ottawa. The Commission held its organization meeting on May 26. Between this date and the end of June, when their investigations were concluded, the members visited Victoria, Nanaimo, Vancouver, North Vancouver, New Westminster, Chilliwack, the Okanagan Valley, Prince Rupert, etc., examining possible sites and hearing evidence of those who presented briefs. The report of the Commission, dated June 28, was published on September 25, 1910, in part, as follows:

The University Site Commissioners are strongly of the opinion that the University should not be placed on a site which may in turn be completely surrounded by a city. They respectfully suggest that not less than 250 acres be set apart for the University Campus and 700 acres for experimental purposes in agriculture and forestry. This is exclusive of a forest reserve for forestry operations on a large scale.

The Commissioners are of the opinion that the most suitable site is at Point Grey unless the soil there and that of the delta land adjacent are found to be unsuitable for the experimental work of the College of Agriculture. Should Point Grey prove impossible, the Commissioners suggest—first, a site along the shore west of North Vancouver, provided the tunnel and bridge are constructed; second, St. Mary's Hill overlooking the Pitt, Fraser and Coquitlam Rivers, provided residences are erected

for the students. Central Park, though conveniently located, will probably be surrounded by the Cities of Vancouver and New Westminster, and because of this and the absence of outstanding scenic advantage is undesirable.

So it was that Point Grey, which has often been declared by visitors to be the most beautiful university site in the world, was selected for the University of British Columbia. The decision was hailed with joy by Vancouver, with bitter disappointment by Victoria and with tolerant or unconcerned satisfaction elsewhere in the Province.

The Site Commissioners, probably at the request of the Government and Dr. Young, included in their report expressions of their opinion as educationists on matters which, while lying outside their immediate terms of reference, were certain very soon to be the subject of important policy decisions by the University. They supported their proposal for a large acreage (700) for experimental purposes in agriculture and forestry with their expressed conviction that it was "of the highest importance to have all the Faculties of the University doing work of University grade located together," but they thought agricultural education should be divided "between the College of Agriculture at the University and Schools of Agriculture of secondary grade located in different centres . . . in conjunction with the Demonstration Farms." They advised the opening of "technical evening schools in the different coal-mining centres . . . and in the metal-mining districts." And, finally, "impressed by the very generous provision made for the endowment of the University," they suggested salary grades for the professors of \$3,000 to \$5,000 which, if adopted, would "attract men of the highest ability who . . . will place the University on an equality with the best Universities in America."

The Government acted at once, in partial compliance at least, with the recommendations of the Commission, and, in December 1910, reserved 175 acres for the University on the Point Grey site, less than one-fifth of the total acreage suggested (950), but the action was a practical demonstration of interest in the university project and meanwhile did not involve the Government in financial outlay. At the same time the Land Endowment Act of 1907 was amended to extend from 3 to 6 years the period within which the 2,000,000 acres were to be set apart for university endowment.

When the controversial question of the site had been settled, the Minister of Education turned his attention to the search for a President, who, under the terms of the Act, in the first instance, was to be appointed by the Government. The finding of the right man took a long time; it was just over two years before the appointment was made, in January 1913. Because of the seeming lavish endowment of the University and the spacious plans for its future, wide interest was

aroused in the appointment. As early as June 1910 the first letters of application and recommendations began to reach Dr. Young. These increased in number and continued to arrive from Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom until after the President was selected. The choice was made more difficult by the lofty ideal which Dr. Young had set before himself in the qualities of the first President. He agreed with the opinion of Dr. S. D. Scott, editor of *The News Advertiser* in Vancouver, who was to become one of the first Governors, when he wrote that, in choosing a President,

The Government should act with the utmost care, since in this they were facing the largest question to be settled and the one which will have the most influence on the future of the Province.⁷

Extensive enquiries were made of prominent educationists. Dr. Young attended the First Congress of the Universities of the Empire in England in the summer of 1912 at which he represented the University of British Columbia, numbered 53 and last on the roll of universities represented. Early in the same summer, in company with Dr. Alexander Robinson, Superintendent of Education, and Dr. S. D. Scott he visited Eastern Canada and the United States to interview possible appointees. How great were his ambitions is shown by the fact that he offered the position to Dr. R. A. (later Sir Robert) Falconer, President of Toronto University. Equally great was Dr. Young's disappointment at Dr. Falconer's gently-worded but firm refusal. He had been less than five years in Toronto and did not feel he could properly give up his responsibilities there. Finally, after many names had been canvassed and many interviews held, the decision was made, and at a meeting of the Provincial Cabinet on January 27, 1913, the office of President was tendered to Frank Fairchild Wesbrook.

In announcing the appointment to the Legislature on February 16, 1913, Dr. Young said,

What we wanted was first of all a Canadian, young enough to take charge vigorously, a man thoroughly capable for the hardest job outside that of the Premier in British Columbia. And I say tonight we are getting that man. He is a man in the prime of life. He is a Canadian. Dr. Wesbrook is his name, and he is at present Dean of the Medical Faculty of the University of Minnesota, a man who has fought his way up and holds an academical reputation second to none.

Dr. Wesbrook was 45. The foundation of his medical career was laid on degrees in Arts and Medicine in Manitoba University. After a summer session at McGill, his studies took him for five years abroad to Dublin, to Cambridge, as a scholarship student, and for a few months to Marburg, Germany. He returned to his

⁷ Sydney Scott: "Makers of the University—Snowdon Dunn Scott"; U.B.C. Alumni Chronicle, Vol. 11, No. 2, Summer, 1957, p. 23.

Alma Mater in Winnipeg as Professor of Pathology. Then, at the age of 28, he accepted appointment to the Chair of Pathology, Bacteriology and Public Health in the University of Minnesota. At the age of 39 he was made Dean of Medicine. His administrative abilities were also recognized by his appointment as Director of the State Board of Health. He was elected President of the American Public Health Association in 1905. In his 17 years at Minnesota he had won an enviable place in the minds and hearts of his colleagues and students. One who knew him through this period wrote of him much later:

The influence of this great character and personality became apparent early. The intervening years only attested Westbrook's great capacity to stimulate others. He was the most attractive personality I have ever met.⁸

Minnesota's loss, deplored by university and city circles when his appointment was announced there, was gain to U.B.C. and British Columbia, where, in 1913, he was almost an unknown person. In the five short years of his presidency his strong idealism inspired all those who knew him, and set the University on a broad and liberal path from which it has never since deviated.

During the year preceding the appointment of the President, the Government went forward with other important arrangements for the University. In the 1912 session, \$500,000 was voted for construction of buildings, and \$200,000 for organization purposes. These appropriations, it was thought, would "permit a formal opening of the University at the Fall Session of 1913." Amendments were made to the University Act, aimed chiefly at improving administrative details. Plans for university buildings were selected by a competition open only to architects resident in Canada, with a prize of \$4,000 for the successful competitor, and three other cash prizes. Architects were invited to submit a sketch of a general design for the whole University and plans for four buildings to be erected at once, viz., Arts and Science, Agriculture, a dormitory to house 100 to 150 students, and a power house. As judges for the competition the Government appointed the Minister of Education, the President of the University, the Chairman of Convocation, two resident architects, Mr. Samuel McClure, of Victoria, and Mr. A. Arthur Cox, of Vancouver, who were not competing, and a leading British architect, Mr. W. Douglas Caröe, as Chairman. The report of the judges, submitted on November 13, 1912, declared Messrs. Sharp and Thompson the winners. In this way began the association of the well-known Vancouver firm of architects with the University of British Columbia — an association which has continued down to the present.

Perhaps the most important among the University calendar of events in 1912 was the election by Convocation of the Chancellor and of the 15 elective mem-

8 E. L. Tuohy, in *Minnesota Medicine*, Vol. 26, No. 1, January, 1943.

bers of the University Senate. The choice, for Chancellor, of the Honourable Francis Carter-Cotton was a happy one. His position as Chancellor of the Royal Institution made easier the transition from McGill B.C. to U.B.C. In his newspaper, *The News Advertiser*, he had given a constant support to the cause of higher education in the Province. His membership in the Legislative Assembly for upwards of fifteen years, for six years of which he was a Cabinet Minister, proved of great value to the University Board of Governors.

The results of the election were announced at the first Convocation, held in Victoria on August 21, 1912. This meeting, which was attended by over 400 of the 739 registered members of Convocation, was clearly regarded by the Government as a sort of launching ceremony for the University. It was attended by the Lieutenant-Governor, the Honourable Thomas W. Paterson; the Premier, the Honourable Sir Richard McBride; Dr. Young as Minister of Education; the Honourable William J. Bowser, Attorney-General, and other members of the Government. The Lieutenant-Governor and the Premier spoke briefly, the latter painting, in eloquent phrases, a glowing picture of the University-to-be.

Dr. Young gave the principal address. He stressed the advantages of the Government's Land Endowment policy for financing the University. He defended the Government against those who criticized it for moving so slowly. The selection of 2,000,000 acres for endowment was, in its nature, a slow and difficult undertaking. He emphasized the positive achievements so far—an immensely satisfactory Education Act, the site at Point Grey with plans to enlarge it, the budget appropriations of the current year. All these advantages, he suggested, were secured only after a fight. He spoke of the competition then being conducted for building plans and described the qualities the Government was looking for in the man to be chosen as President. He praised the work being done in McGill College and hoped that lectures in the Provincial University would begin in 1913. After delivering his speech, Dr. Young then introduced Chancellor Carter-Cotton who, in a few words, paid tribute to Dr. Young and modestly said the honour had come to him not for personal merit but because of his work for McGill and the Royal Institution.

Dr. Young, when announcing the President's appointment, at the 1913 session of the Legislature, said he was still hopeful that the University would begin work that year. "We will have the organization perfected," he said, "to the extent that it will be possible for us to open classes, and I hope that in 1914 the first B.A. Degree will be given from the University of British Columbia." He did not, of course, expect the University to be in its new buildings. No construction had been done yet; the \$500,000 of the previous year was re-voted for 1913.

A second amendment to the Land Endowment Act was passed, further extending, from six to nine years, i.e., to 1916, the period within which the Crown lands might be reserved under the 1907 Act. The Government completed its part in creating the University's administrative structure with the appointment of the Board of Governors on April 4, 1913 and the naming of its three appointees to the Senate on April 14.

The Board of Governors was composed of nine leading citizens of Victoria and Vancouver, representing business, financial and professional interests. From Victoria were two Members of Parliament, Robert Green, veteran member of the House, formerly of the Slokan Riding, Kootenay West, and George H. Barnard, K.C.; from Vancouver, two members of the Royal Institution, R. P. McLennan, prominent merchant, and Campbell Sweeny, a leading banker; Dr. R. E. McKechnie, Lewis G. McPhillips, K.C., Robie L. Reid, K.C., Dr. S. D. Scott, and George I. Wilson, a businessman.

The names of the elected members of Senate included many who had actively supported the movement for a provincial university and a number who were to render the University long and valuable service. An interesting feature of this first election of Senate members, and one which distinguishes it from most of its successors, was the wide geographical distribution of its members. Victoria was represented by Chief Justice Hunter and Mrs. M. R. Watt; Summerland, by E. M. Sawyer; Nelson, by N. Wolverton; New Westminster, by F. W. Howay; Trail, by J. M. Turnbull, later and for many years Professor and Head of the Department of Mining and Metallurgy in the University. Vancouver had the lion's share with nine members: two strong opponents of the McGill University College Act of 1906, F. C. Wade, K.C., and Dr. J. M. Pearson; two of the same Act's warmest champions, W. P. Argue and Dr. W. D. Brydone-Jack; two future members of the Board of Governors, Mrs. Evelyn F. Farris and Dr. R. E. McKechnie, who later became Chancellor; and E. P. Davie, K.C., J. S. Gordon, later Vancouver Superintendent of Schools, and C. D. Rand, who died not long after the election.

With these men as his advisers and helpers, President Wesbrook entered with fresh and buoyant enthusiasm on the task of organizing the University, taking over the leadership from Dr. Young at the point the latter had reached in April 1913. It is interesting to observe that, when accepting the office of President, he secured the promise that the University would be completely immune from political influence. After looking over the situation he decided at once that it would not be possible, as the Minister had hoped, to begin lectures in the autumn of that year, and his Board of Governors agreed to request McGill University to carry on for two more years, i.e., to the end of the session 1914-15. This realistic

decision was taken at the first formal meeting of the Board, held on April 18, 1913. The interval of two and a half years was welcomed by the President as giving him breathing space and elbow room in his new environment. He had time now to become acquainted with the community life of the Province in all its phases and to think out, at greater leisure, the service to be rendered by the University. More time also was available to plan the buildings, appoint staff and deal with what he termed the "enormous initial work in financial and other organization." He was heartened by the cordial welcome given him by the Premier and Members of the Cabinet, by the press, university graduates and by business and professional men and women in all parts of the Province. He was embarrassed by the number of requests he received to give addresses. The interest aroused in the new University, outside the Province, and the respect with which the President was regarded were shown when the universities of Manitoba and Toronto conferred on him the Honorary Degree of LL.D. He was invited to give the address when the University of Manitoba installed Dr. MacLean as their new President in November following his own appointment. He chose as his subject, "The Provincial University in Canadian Development." He said:

The people's University must meet *all* the needs of *all* the people. We must therefore proceed with care to the erection of those Workshops where we may design and fashion the tools needed in the building of a nation and from which we can survey and lay out paths of enlightenment, tunnel the mountains of ignorance and bridge the chasms of incompetence. Let us pray that posterity may say of us that we builded even better than we knew.

The records show with what tender care Dr. Wesbrook and his associates proceeded with the erection of his "Workshop" which was to be the University of British Columbia.

An office was secured as temporary headquarters for the President in the Carter-Cotton Building, which is now the re-modelled and enlarged Vancouver Province Building on Victory Square. Here he met with his Board and planned the University. Although the site had already been chosen and architectural plans prepared for the first buildings, more than a year was consumed in further study of the site and building design and in budget negotiations with the Government before tenders were called for construction. At the Board of Governors' meeting in April, the President made his first budget suggestions. He proposed an Arts College of 13 Departments and the appointment of key men for the future Faculties of Agriculture, Forestry, Mining and Engineering. His building programme for the first two years, based on the architects' plans, would include construction of an Arts and Science building, a library, an Agriculture building, a power house and 4 residences for President and staff. This programme would cost \$2,331,000. At the same time, the Board requested the Government to pro-

vide a total of \$8,000,000 for construction extended over a period of 8 years. At this time, Dr. Young saw the possibility of setting up the Agriculture Faculty at the Colony Farm, Coquitlam, and the President accordingly asked the Government for title to this property for the School of Agriculture.

The Government's reply to this first budget was unsatisfactory and a detailed statement of a five-year programme was accordingly prepared. It was presented by the Board of Governors to the Premier, the Minister of Education and two other Cabinet Ministers on May 31, 1913. This was the first of many such budget conferences to be held in Victoria in U.B.C. history. The cost of this five-year plan — 1913-1918 — for building and maintenance amounted to over \$7,500,000. The response of the Government was generous. The Premier promised \$2,800,000 over a two-year period, of which \$1,000,000 would be charged without interest against the Endowment Lands. He spoke of a possible issue, in two years' time, of "land bonds" for \$10,000,000.

With budget difficulties settled, for the time being, the Board turned to the business of a site and buildings. Following up a suggestion of the judges in the University plans competition, the President and Thornton Sharp, University architect, were sent to inspect the campus arrangements in certain Canadian and American universities. As a result of their report the decision was made to get additional expert advice on the general design of the U.B.C. campus and on the related question of the location of the Agriculture Faculty, before erecting any buildings. Three consultants were appointed to study, with the University architects, the problems of buildings and grounds. These men were: Dr. Thomas H. Mawson, city planner and landscape artist of London, England; Warren Powers Laird, Professor and Head, School of Architecture, University of Pennsylvania and Advisory Architect to the University of Wisconsin; and Richard J. Durley, late Professor and Head, Department of Mechanical Engineering, McGill University. Dr. C. C. James, Commissioner of Dominion Agricultural Instruction, was engaged to examine the question of where the Faculty of Agriculture should be located. Both reports were submitted in mid-November, 1913. The report of the Commission on buildings and landscaping was long and detailed. Their general design was for a university "comparable in the range and magnitude of its activities to the seats of learning of any country in the world." Their plans and drawings were approved by the Board of Governors and have given continued guidance to the development of the campus ever since.

Dr. James, in his report, strongly recommended that agricultural study, both lectures and field work, be closely associated with the University, and urged the need for 200 more acres at Point Grey for this purpose. He even suggested that agricultural teaching be abandoned unless it could be done under such condi-

tions. The Board of Governors was impressed by this report and set about to have it implemented. So began what proved to be a long struggle for more agricultural land at the University site. President Wesbrook, to begin with, seems to have shared Dr. Young's views that the Faculty of Agriculture might well be established at Colony Farm; in fact, the five-year budget, presented earlier that year, provided for the erection of the Agriculture Faculty buildings at Coquitlam. To the Board of Governors, who met with the Premier and Cabinet in December to press the case for agricultural teaching at Point Grey, Premier McBride, supporting his Minister of Education, wrote that the Government was "unable to give the increased area of land asked for, considering the generous provision already made by the Province for the purpose of instituting the University." He felt that the University would have "no untoward difficulty" in commencing instructional work in agriculture with the use of Colony Farm. The Board renewed its request, asking for a lease, instead of a grant, of 200 acres, but the matter remained unsettled.

Before the 1914 session of the Legislature met early in the year, both the Premier and Dr. Young spoke in glowing terms of the University to which special attention was to be given by the Government. "The buildings," the Premier said, "would be second to none on the Continent." To the Annual Convention of the Farmers' Institute in January he promised that the University would have an Agricultural College "to take care of our young men and women who intend to take up the industry, instead of allowing them to go to Guelph, Winnipeg or across the line." The Minister of Education predicted an enrolment of 1,000 at the first session. Sir Richard expected from "1,500 to 2,000 students" within three years. But the shadows of the Government's financial problems were already lengthening: in 1913 the Provincial Treasury had a deficit of nearly \$3,000,000; in 1914 it was over \$5,000,000. And the University budget had to be pruned substantially in the 1914 appropriations. Even so, the Premier generously yielded to the urgent requests of the Board of Governors and promised a grant of \$500,000 with \$1,000,000 to be expected in a year's time. It was now March, 1914, and President Wesbrook drew up a budget on the basis of a little over \$1,500,000 to carry through to September 1916. The current year's appropriation of \$500,000 would be used for the erection of the Science Building at Point Grey. Some thought was given for the first time also to the possibility of holding some classes for one year in the quarters of McGill College at Fairview. The Premier had promised that the Government would bear the cost of temporary quarters which might be required until the permanent buildings were ready. The way was now clear for action and, in June, 1914, the Board of Governors called for tenders for the Science Building.

It was too late. The storm-clouds of World War I were already gathering to break two months later. For five years, Dr. Young had waged a battle in the Cabinet to establish a provincial university in a home worthy of its high purposes and where its function, as a servant of the state, could be adequately discharged. Dr. Wesbrook had worked with careful, unrelenting energy toward this end during his first year of office as President. Now, when success was in sight, the grim spectre of war intervened and put an end to their endeavours. On August 13, after consultation with the Government, the Board of Governors returned unopened the seven tenders submitted by the construction companies. It was agreed, however, that a start might be made on the work at the Point Grey site. At the end of August, the contract was awarded for the excavation and concrete frame-work of the Science Building, and operations commenced early in September. The Board still did not despair of moving the University to Point Grey, after not more than a year at Fairview. An examination was made in October of the University Endowment Lands in the hope that they might provide a way out of the financial impasse. Dr. L. S. Klinck, Professor of Cereal Husbandry at MacDonald College, McGill University, had been appointed Dean of Agriculture. He had given assistance and advice to the President during the summer in the problem of locating the Faculty of Agriculture. He was now commissioned by the University Board to make a survey of some of the Endowment Lands. Dean Klinck's reports on 100,000 acres in the Chilcotin country, and on other areas which he either examined or on which he received reports from informed sources, revealed the discouraging fact that significant revenues could not be expected from these lands in the near future.

In December, the President began to prepare his first war-time budget. The Premier told him of the critical financial situation of the Province and urged him "to curtail expenditures at every point." In the face of an empty Provincial Treasury it was useless to argue that the University had so far cost a total of only \$204,067.69 and that out of its second annual appropriation of \$500,000 it had received only \$100,000, of which it still had on hand almost \$25,000. Without knowing the amount which the Government was prepared to spend on the University, in 1915-16, Dr. Wesbrook presented alternate budgets, both of which visualized the move to Point Grey in 1916, and the completion of the Science Building, at least, of the permanent buildings. The lesser of the two budgets was for an expenditure of \$996,540. The response from Victoria was received on December 31, 1914, in a telegram from the Premier: the Government could do no more than pay for the completing of the concrete frame of the Science Building, and for maintenance of the University in McGill University College at Fairview. The Premier did not yet state what amount would be avail-

able for the University session 1915 · 16. President Wesbrook's Board unanimously agreed with him "that a first-class institution cannot be inaugurated and maintained for more than one year in the quarters now occupied by McGill University College." In a last despairing effort the President prepared a plan which would establish the University at Point Grey at once, i.e., in September, 1915, in temporary wooden buildings erected during the summer for Arts, Applied Science, Agriculture, Library, Administration, and including a cafeteria. The total cost would be slightly over \$100,000; the plan would involve a budget of \$409,770.35, in addition to the balance of the 1914 appropriation.

A committee of the Board, with the President, met with the Premier and Cabinet for a final discussion on January 15, 1915. Sir Richard expressed his admiration for the efforts of Dr. Wesbrook and the Board of Governors but stated that, on account of the War,

the grants . . . would have to be abandoned for the present and the whole effort of the Government and the Board of Governors of the University would be directed towards keeping the original scheme intact, pending the return of happier times.

This was the end. The President was now informed that the Government estimates would contain an appropriation of \$175,000 for 1915 · 16, to cover Arts and Engineering courses to be given in the McGill University College buildings. Dr. Wesbrook prepared his sixth and last budget for that year to come within this amount. The University would offer Fourth Year work in Arts and, possibly, Third Year work in certain branches of Engineering, including Mining. The teaching staff would be obtained by fusing members of the McGill College staff with those engaged by President Wesbrook.

The vain effort during the years 1908-1915 to bring the University to its destined home at Point Grey was over. The effort and its result bring to mind the words of the Roman poet, Horace: *parturiunt montes, nascetur ridiculus mus* (the mountains labour; a funny little mouse is born). And for 10 years the skeleton of the Science Building stood, summer and winter, to the weather, as a gaunt reminder of the futile but gallant labours of two practical men of vision, Henry Esson Young and Frank Fairchild Wesbrook. It remained for others to clothe the skeleton with granite and mortar.

More important than buildings in the life and achievement of the University was the selection of a competent staff, which became one of the early tasks facing Dr. Wesbrook, after he became President. McGill University College might supply a nucleus of the University staff when the change-over took place, but the increase in the number of Faculties and in the number and range of courses to be given made it necessary to find men to fill the many new posts to be created by the University. At the end of December, 1913, Dr. Wesbrook was sent for three

President Westbrook Chooses his Staff

months to survey the university field in Eastern Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom. His recommendations on his return led to the appointment in the summer of 1914 of four men who were to exercise a large influence on the life of U.B.C., viz., L. S. Klinck, Dean of Agriculture, R. W. Brock, Dean of Applied Science, Douglas McIntosh, Professor and Head of the Department of Chemistry and H. Ashton, Assistant Professor of French. At the time of his appointment, Brock was Director of the Canadian Geological Survey and Deputy Minister of Mines in Ottawa; McIntosh was Associate Professor of Chemistry at McGill; Ashton, a distinguished French Scholar, member of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, was a Lecturer at Birmingham University. Howard Barnes, Professor of Physics, on account of war duties did not take up his appointment and later decided to remain at McGill University. H. R. Fairclough, Professor and Head of Classics, could not secure his release from Stanford University. J. T. Gerould, Librarian of the University of Minnesota, was engaged to purchase books for the University Library. After obtaining about 20,000 volumes in the United Kingdom and France, he arrived in Leipsic, Germany, on August 3, 1914. On the advice of his bookseller there, he tried to leave the country because of the war situation, but was forcibly detained for three weeks as a spy. Incriminating evidence, adduced by the German police as sufficient reason for his detention, was a plan of the University at Point Grey which was found in his belongings! The outbreak of war on August 4 created a sense of apprehension and urgency regarding staff appointments, and, on August 10, four senior members of McGill College staff were selected by the Board of Governors, viz., G. E. Robinson as Associate Professor of Mathematics and Registrar, J. G. Davidson as Associate Professor of Physics, Lemuel Robertson as Assistant Professor of Classics and Henri Chodat as Assistant Professor of Modern Languages. After another trip to Eastern Canada and the United States in the spring of 1915, Dr. Westbrook secured the services of E. H. Archibald as Assistant Professor of Chemistry and of S. Mack Eastman as Assistant Professor of History. On July 5, 1915, the Board of Governors received and accepted the President's recommendations about the disposition of the McGill staff. Lemuel Robertson was raised to the rank of Associate Professor and given a three-year appointment. H. K. Dutcher (Civil Engineering), J. Kaye Henry (English), L. Killam (Mechanical Engineering), James Henderson (Philosophy), R. E. Macnaghten (Greek) were appointed as Assistant Professors; Miss Isabel MacInnes (Modern Languages), E. E. Jordan (Mathematics) and H. T. Logan (Classics) were appointed as Instructors. The University staff was further enlarged by the appointments of J. M. Turnbull as Professor of Mining; E. Howard Russell, lately of Victoria College, as Assistant Professor of Mathematics; F. G. C. Woods as Instructor of English;

E. G. Matheson as Instructor in Civil Engineering, and W. H. Powell as Special Instructor in Field Work. H. R. Kemp was appointed Instructor in Classics in place of H. T. Logan, who was granted leave of absence in August for overseas service. The final staff adjustment was made in October when S. J. Schofield was appointed in Geology in place of Brock, who had been granted leave of absence in July for overseas service. These were the staff members to whom, as teachers, were entrusted the fortunes of U.B.C. at its birth.

Many other matters claimed the attention of President Wesbrook and his Board of Governors during the summer of 1915, preparatory to the opening of the University in September. Matriculation requirements were settled, in conference with the Department of Education. The Calendar for the University of British Columbia, first session, 1915-16, was prepared by a joint committee: Messrs. Brock and McIntosh of the University, and Messrs. Robertson and Robinson of McGill College. A committee, representing the University and the Royal Institution Boards, worked out problems connected with the taking over of buildings and property, the fusion of staffs and the status of students. Two new wooden buildings, of the cheapest possible construction, were erected at the Fairview site to house the new Departments of Geology and Mining. The Fairview shacks were complete and ready for their new occupants.

One sad event occurred as the University took over the work of the Royal Institution. In the final planning on its shrunken budget, the University Board of Governors found their funds were insufficient to continue classes in Victoria College for the 70 students who were registered there in the 1914-15 session. A fruitless appeal was made to the Government for financial assistance to enable the Victoria School Board to carry the load, and the College was closed. This war casualty was keenly felt at the time and the friends of the College did not rest until its classes were resumed in affiliation with the University when the War was over.

Of special significance in the history of the University was the informal meeting of the University Senate, held on July 15, 1915. Members of Senate had not met since their election in August, 1912. Their membership was still below strength. There were as yet no official Faculty representatives and High School Principals and Assistants and the Provincial Teachers' Institute had failed to name their representatives. Eleven members, with the Chancellor and President, attended. It was called together by President Wesbrook to report progress in University organization and academic planning. Senate approval was given to the President's proposal that degrees should be granted in the spring of 1916. Difficult conditions in undergraduate life, brought about by the war, were evident in the discussion of the University curriculum. Senate was strongly of the opinion

The University Coat of Arms

that compulsory military training should be required of all male students, physically fit. The Board of Governors gave its approval to this suggestion in a regulation which added that military training must be taken for at least two years. This feature of the curriculum would offer no problem as the Canadian Officers Training Corps was already functioning in McGill College, where military instruction had been introduced in the autumn term of 1914. The University Calendar appeared from the press of the King's Printer, Victoria, in August and the stage was set for the curtain to rise on the first session of U.B.C.

Reference has been made earlier to President Wesbrook's idea of the function of a provincial university; as an educational institution it existed to serve all the needs of all the people. It was something therefore that belonged in a real sense to the people of the Province. This idea found symbolic expression in the official Coat of Arms, which was proudly displayed on the front cover of the first Calendar. It consists of the Provincial Coat of Arms as a base on which rests an open book, inscribed with the two Latin words, *Tuum Est* (It is Yours), a motto chosen by Dr. Wesbrook himself. By the many generations of students who have since passed through the University, the words have been variously interpreted as meaning: "The University is yours; make what use of it you can;" or, alternately, with a personal, ethical content, "It's up to you." To President Wesbrook the words, no doubt, meant all this, but also much more than this. They were addressed not only to future generations of undergraduates but also to their parents and to all the citizens of the Province. "The University is yours." This is the basic idea on which the University was founded; the spirit in which it has served the Province during its first half-century.

*Methinks I find in Time's still sealed pages
Records of those whom in my Halls I see,
Fighting the fight which stretches down the ages,
And all the better for their knowing me.*

A.J.A., "U.B.C. SPEAKS."